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ABSTRACT

A trustee orientation or colloquium program designed to enable representatives of various college governing and administrative bodies to meet together and share ideas is described. The proposed model was used at Emmanuel College in Boston. The college is governed by a Board of Trustees, appointed by the Corporation, which owns the college. The communication model sought to open dialogue between these two governing bodies and to broaden communication throughout the campus. The purpose of the colloquium was to orient trustees to the history, educational mission, and challenges facing the institution. The program included informative addresses by outside speakers and consultants; panel discussions by administrators, faculty, and students; large lecture presentations and question and answer periods; and small group discussions. An important component in the success of the program was the inclusion of the social hours to facilitate informal communication. The program schedule for January 12-13, 1979, and some brief comments on the program are included. (SW)

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A COMMUNICATION MODEL

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TRUSTEE - CORPORATION COLLOQUIAM: A
COMMUNICATION MODEL

One of the problems facing college governing boards today is that of achieving articulation, definition and communication among the various components of the college community. This lack of communication often gives rise to rumors, fears and innuendos throughout the campus. The basic cause of the problem is getting representatives of the various governing and administrating bodies to meet together and share ideas. One solution that has worked is that of the Trustee Orientation or Colloquiam Program. Ideally, in order to be most fruitful, such a forum for discussion should take place at the beginning of the academic year.

The proposed model was used at Emmanuel, a small, liberal-arts college for women in Boston. The College is governed by a Board of Trustees, appointed by the Corporation, which owns the College. Over the years, communication between the two governing boards of the College had become sporadic and limited to public occasion. Mistrust and misunderstanding of aims, purposes and methods had culminated in the recent resignation of several members of the Board of Trustees. The appointment of new trustees seemed to offer the ideal opportunity both to open dialogue between the two governing bodies and to broaden communication throughout the campus.

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The term "colloquiam" was chosen in preference to "orientation" because of its more favorable connotation in a community of professionals; but the purpose of the session remained as it was conceived: to orient trustees to the history, educational mission and challenges facing the institution. Very often, new trustees have little knowledge of the background, philosophy and current status of their institution, and even less chance to get to know each other on an informal basis before they begin to work together on the serious business of the college. In an institution such as Emmanuel, in which two separate bodies are responsible for the governance of the college, it seemed imperative that some opportunity for dialogue and communication be provided.

The program, which was hosted by the Corporation of the College, took place on a Friday afternoon and evening and all day on the following Saturday, to best suit the busy schedule of the participants. Informative addresses by outside speakers and consultants were presented to Trustee and Corporation members during the first session on Friday. Panel discussions by administrators, faculty and students followed on Saturday morning. The entire administration, and representatives from the faculty, students and alumnae were invited to participate in this second session. Large lecture presentations were followed by question and answer periods, reactions and small group discussions. Spouses of trustees were invited to all events except the actual meeting of the Board of Trustees.

An important component in the success of the program was the inclusion of the social hours to facilitate informal communication: the series of refreshment breaks on Friday and the coffee hours and luncheon on Saturday admirably served that purpose. Care was taken to hold such interludes in an attractive, relaxed setting.

The entire program concluded with the regular Board of Trustees meeting in closed session, presumably with enhanced knowledge of the college and its goals and problems. The actual program of the Corporation - Trustee Colloquiam presented at Emmanuel College in January, 1979 follows:

PROGRAM

January 12-13, 1979

Friday

3:30 p.m.	Coffee Hour	Faculty-Alumnae Lounge Marian Hall, 2nd. floor
4:00 p.m.	History of Emmanuel presented by Sister Mary John Hoye, Professor Emeritus	
4:30 p.m.	The Role of Trustees presented by Frank A. Tredinnick Executive Vice President of AICUM (Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Massachusetts)	
	Question and Answer Period	

5:10 p.m.	Coffee Break	
5:20 p.m.	The Role of the Corporation presented by Members of the Corporation Sister Eileen Gertrude Mahoney Sister Magdalen Julie Wallace Question and Answer Period	
5:45 p.m.	Remarks of Acting President Sister Janet Eisner	
6:00 p.m.	Sherry Hour	President's Dining Room
6:30 p.m.	Dinner for Trustees and Corporation	Faculty Dining Room
8:00 p.m.	After-Dinner Dialogue between Trustees and Corporation: Reactions and Responses	President's Dining Room

SATURDAY

9:30 a.m.	Coffee and Danish	Faculty-Alumnae Lounge
10:00 a.m.	Adminstrative Panel Moderator: Mary Ann T. Burns Academic Dean Panelists: Faith Degenhart Director of Development Edward M. Gillis Director of Admissions Sister Mary T. Kelleher Dean of Students Sister Mary Ellen O'Keefe Dean of Continuing Education Donald J. Procaccini Vice President for Academic Planning and Research	
10:45 a.m.	Coffee Break	

11:00 a.m. Faculty Panel

Moderator:
Claire L. Lang
Faculty Representative to
Board of Trustees

Panelists:
Rev. Richard J. Beauchesne
Division IV
G. Douglas Crandall
Chairperson of Faculty Caucus of the
College Council, and Division II
F. Donald Logan
Division III
Lenore C. Martin
Chairperson of Faculty Senate
Sister Anne Stevenson
Division I

11:45 a.m. Student Panel — Faculty-Alumnae Lounge

Moderator:
Marie Cannon
Student Representative
to Board of Trustees

Panelists:
Nan Butterfield
President, Class of 1980
April DerBoghosian
President, Class of 1981
Jan Griffin
President, Student Representative Organization
Mary Johnson
President, Class of 1979

12:30 p.m. Social Hour — President's Dining Room

12:45 p.m. Luncheon — Faculty Dining Room

1:30 p.m. Guest Speaker — Faculty Dining Room
Frederick Jacobs
Adminstrative Director
The Institute for Educational Management
Harvard University

2:30 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting — Library Conference Room, Cardinal Cushing Library

(Spouses of Trustees may wish to use this time to visit the nearby Gardner Museum or Museum of Fine Arts)

END OF PROGRAM

As in the planning and execution of any such event, practical considerations and details (name tags, welcoming committee and introductions, and suggested activities for spouses of the Trustees in the form of campus or local museum tours) were important. In the initial invitation to the trustees from the corporation, alternative dates in case of snow were proposed. Upon arrival at the Colloquiam, trustees were provided with folders containing pertinent material on the college; i.e., a brief history of the college and of the Sisters of Notre Dame who own it, brochures containing information on current college programs, financial information, etc.

Both informal reactions and written evaluation forms were used to assess the results of the Colloquiam and response was overwhelmingly positive and favorable. Trustees seem genuinely pleased and appreciative of the opportunity to meet with the corporation, faculty and students in a situation both informative and enjoyable. Corporation members welcomed the opportunity to explain and articulate their unique and complementary role in the governance of the college. Administrators,

faculty, students and alumnae representatives enjoyed the chance to meet and talk with the trustees in informal as well as in large formal presentations. The session was generally rated a success.

Some implications and suggestions for the future arose out of the first Colloquiam. Since the first "generalized" program was so successful, it will be followed in subsequent years with programs of differing focuses depending on the current needs and interests of the institution - i.e., admissions, continuing education, student life, development and other significent issues.

SUMMARY

The effective governance and management of a college depends in no small part on a close and cooperative relationship among the various governing and administrative bodies of the institution. The sample Colloquiam session is presented here in the hope that it might serve as a preliminary model and impetus for other institutions interested in facilitating communication, dialogue and mutual understanding among the various components of the college community as they face the issues of college governance and long-range planning.